Concept of Peace and Harmony in The Buddhism & Islam: A Comparative Study

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Abstract:

The research paper aims at to analyze and determine the role and scope of religion for maintaining peace and harmony all across the world. We can state without exaggeration that Religion is positive factor for it goes a long way to maintain peace and invoke harmony and integration for humanity. A brief glance at the religions of the world reveals that all religions of the world have their own rights and stand for the peace in the world. Buddhist moral and spiritual teachings to great extent stand for brotherhood and harmony throughout the world. Similarly, Islam recognizes the fact that each religious teacher has faith in his own mission and wants to establish peace for mankind. Both religions are a living organization of peace and harmony for humanity. Hence in the light of religions and their teachings, both are aim at for betterment of humanity as well as propagate the message of love, equality, brotherhood, justice and equity.

Keyword(s): Buddhism, Harmony, Islam, Peace, Religion

I. Introduction:

The Relation of Religion and Human Being:

The important point which attracts our attention during the study of evolutionary development of human being is the relationship between human beings and religion. The life at its lower level of existence like that of animals and plants remains devoid of the concept of God and worship or altogether submission to the Creator, but no longer does it transcend to its higher level of consciousness like human being, religion becomes inalienable part and need of man. The religious ideology and teachings also progressed and evolved with the passage of time vis-a-vis human cognitive evolution. Hence religion has played a pivotal role in uplifting human moral values, devising solutions regarding psychological complexities and psychic phenomenon, character-building and mutual understanding among different fibers of the society. Thus it testifies that

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religion had been an integrated and inseparable part of social development and cognitive evolution. The traces of religion are noticeable in all areas of human learning and development.

The discovery of archeological findings provide information which authenticates this assumption that religion has remained cardinal stimulus and source of inspiration and integration among the nations, emergence of civilizations and unity among groups and nations.

The study of the history of religion reveals an interesting point that intuitional inclination of man towards religion is as old as far the traces of his conscious existence are found: both go hand in hand. The ancient remains and history has dived deep to unfold the various mysteries related to life and bring forth an objective and scientifically logical answer to these questions, but the most important thing the history, archeology and anthropology has found is the deep sense of attachment of human with religion in all parts of the world through all eras and epochs of history, among all nations and civilization. In addition, if the contribution of religion regarding the development of civilization and culture is objectively analyzed, it becomes a well-established fact that religion has not only provided them profound footings to flourish but also has provided them with unique direction to reach their zenith.

The origin of Disintegration and Disputes in the Society and the Reasons of Extremism:

Extremism, basically, is an understanding or conviction a person or a group develops with the view point that their faith, ideology, code of conduct, living standard or style are unique, true therefore are sacrosanct and unquestionable. All the social scientists have agreed to the point that the wave of extremism undermines the very foundation of the society only when the violence and exploitation of social and political rights, religio-lingual superiority and disparity, oppression, socio-political injustice, immoral practices, uncouth traditions or values take their roots in the society. In the famous book: "Introduction to Sociology" defines extremism: "When the social values and laws are changed or confined for the materialistic benefit and self-centered gains of an individual or a particular group instead of those of general population, it culminates in the social rift; collectivism and nation integrity deteriorate to lowest ebb; hence the unique values for collective good and betterment of humanity in large get replaced with trends and practices of vested interests and individual personal gains. Thus, some individual or group of people manifest a particular reaction by doing some odd actions or activities, which may pose potential threat or damages to the life or property of other people or group.[1]

In 1953, Raymond A. Dart presented the curst of his research in one of his essays "The Predatory Transition from Ape to Man", he maintains:

"The blood-spattered, slaughter-gutted archives of human history from the earliest Egyptian and Sumerian records to the most recent atrocities of the Second World War accord with early universal cannibalism, with animal and human sacrificial practices of their substitutes in formalized religions and with

the world-wide scalping, head-hunting, body-mutilating and necrophilic practices of mankind proclaiming this common bloodlust differentiator, this predaceous habit, this mark of Cain that separates man dietetically from his anthropoidal relatives and allies him rather with the deadliest of Carnivora."[2]

Now the question arises, was man fundamentally inclined towards bloodshed and oppression? Is shedding blood innate part of human nature? Has the man evolved present day civilized values and peaceful entity having undergone the period of barbarism and oppression? Is the man not provided with a system which can control the involving factors leading towards such abnormalities and could refine the conduct of man?

I personally believe that it is religion, which has played pivotal role in bringing man out from the life of animal state and barbarism to this refined and civilized mode of peaceful existence. It is a well-established fact that various religions from ancient to present time have introduced humanity with moral injunctions, the code of conduct, mutual respect and harmonious co-existence which have turned this world into a peaceful place and the man has acquired the status of civilized and cultured species.

The objective study of human history reveals that religion has always endeavored to resist the speedy course of decadence of human values and ever increasing uncertainty and translate it into still higher moral values and standards of ethics. It had been possible that man himself would have annihilated his own existence as being obsessed with the notion of oppression, barbarism, brutality and forcibly-acquired possession, but the teachings of different religions sparked from all across the globe and enlightened the gloomy vistas of human mind and propagated the values of peace, fraternity, equality, sacrifice and sense of responsibility.

It is a well-established fact that the period of 1000 BC in general and 6th century AD in particular had been the golden age of religious evolution, for religion provided man with unique and substantial guiding principles during this period; the cultivated land of Philistine echoed with teachings of Israel; whereas, India was enlightened with the teachings of three contemporary religions viz. Aryan religion which evolved out of Brahmanism and laid the foundation of Hinduism, Buddhism which inculcated valued teachings for the prosperity of humanity and Jainism, which also emphasized on the moral and ethical code of living and gave priority of peace, coexistence and prevalence. During about the same period in China, Confucius and Laozi also introduced man with moral and ethical code of conduct to philosophically transcend human existence to the level of peaceful integrity; moreover, Zoroaster of Iran also preached for the general welfare and common good of mankind and these teachings still prevail and pave way for making this world worth-living. Besides these major religions, almost various minor religions prevailed in all parts of the globe, which strove for peace and progress of mankind.

It is a well-established fact that all religious teachings condemned barbarism, oppression, brutality and exploitation of any sort and promoted peace, justice, brotherhood, equality and liberty. In the study in hand, I will

comparatively analyze and evaluate the teachings of two great religions i.e. Islam and Buddhism.

II. Buddhism and Islam: The Religions of Peace (a comparative study)

Buddhism: Among the religious movements which primarily were carried out on the land of India to bring forth reforms in the ancient traditions of Hinduism, the most important movement was Buddhism which, with the passage of time, emerged as a separate religion and spread even out of India to the various countries of South Asia like Burma, Tibet, China, Thailand and other states because it produced eloquent orators and able preachers. When the revival of Brahmanism took place in India, it reduced the Buddhist into minority and eventually it rolled back from the land of its birth, India; it however flourished in other states of the South Asia, presently, almost 225 million followers of Buddhism are present all across the world.[3]

The history presents no example of the teaching of high moral values like what Buddha presented. His teachings focused on the ways and means to refine and control bodily desires, which culminate in avarice, jealousy, selfishness, anger and revenge, he rather reiterated the principles which could inject the sense of integrity, peace, justice, affection, brotherhood, sympathy, non-violence and equality, which are the chief constituents of Buddhism. It is praiseworthy to mention that marvelous teachings of Buddhism directed humanity to the right path in the times of oppression, cruelty, selfishness and injustice.

Islam: The literary meanings of the word Islam is “to submit or to conciliate” whereas the idiomatic meaning connotes that Islam is the religion of peace, it means the teachings of Islam reiterate that man should submit to the laws of Allah, the Creator, the Nourisher and the Sustainer of the entire universe. The laws and code of conduct of life revealed by Almighty Allah and taught by His prophets spread love, peace, justice, brotherhood, equality and tolerance. In Arabic language, the word “Islam” etymologically means peace, security, safety and equity. Islam as a religion was not only preached and propagated by Hazarat Muhammad (peace be upon him) but all the prophets sent by Almighty Allah did preach and practice the religion of Islam.

“In accordance with the tenets and teaching of Islam, human life has two main reasons and objectives to exist and prevail: individually man should be provided with all essential requisites and laws to live a peaceful and respectable life, collectively essential measures should be taken to invest all human energy, power, wisdom for general good, collective welfare and over all progress and development of the society at global level, so that the march of civilization may proceed to the state of more perfection and better world; moreover, the balance between the individual and society vis-a-vis integration and interrelatedness between the single component and collective body may also be maintained and adjusted to carry on the future course of things. The sort of check and balance propounded by Islam does not allow individual to fringe the rights of society and vice versa”. [4]

It is Islam which laid the foundation of universal brotherhood, and condemned all sorts of discrimination based on caste, creed, colour, riches and possession. The Holy Quran, the last and final revelation of Allah to the last prophet, Hazarat Muhammad (p.b.u.h), categorically reveals:

"O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and female and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (Not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is (he who) is the most righteous of you – and God has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things)." [5]

Besides, the last prophet of Allah, Hazarat Muhammad (p.b.u.h) also inculcated and reiterated the same message to humanity:

"O people! Verily your Lord is One and your father is one. All of you belong to the ancestry of Adam and Adam was created from clay. An Arab is not superior to a non-Arab neither is a non-Arab superior to an Arab. Similarly the white has no superiority over the black nor does the black have superiority over the white: except in piety. Verily the noblest among you is the most pious." [6]

Thus, Islam has provided complete code of conduct for human life and has along with well-expressed tenets of faith, ways and means of worship so that by acting upon the injunctions of Islam man may live a peaceful and respectable life.

Buddhism and Islam: The Religions of Peace:

In order to have a peaceful society, it is incumbent to provide safety to the life and property of the member of that society. In addition to it, an individual should also regard and practice the fundamental laws and codes pertaining to ethics and morality and abstain from evil deeds like theft, robbery, cheating, gambling, addiction and injustice; besides, they may avoid all sorts of indulgence which affect and mar rational faculties. They must live with peace and equality, practice justice and tolerance; respect the rights of one another.

In the light of above perspectives, this research study delves deep to critically analyze and evaluate the teachings of Islam and Buddhism. The paper only focuses the ten commandments of Buddhism for attaining Nirvana (the pure and elevated state of soul) and will analytically dissect them in connection with the injunctions of Islam for the pursuit of purity and elevation of human soul to attain higher self for the general welfare and good of humanity and making this world peaceful and worth-living.

Buddha believes that if any individual intends to abstain from all kinds of sins and wishes to live with piety and prudence must adopt seclusion, practice ascetic life style and exercise simplicity in wearing, eating and drinking. Besides, he needs to avoid profligacy, ostentation, affectation and vanities. The person who abides by these teachings of Buddha by letter and spirit is called Bikhsu.[7]When one becomes Bikhsu, he acts upon these commandments of Buddha to attain Nirvana.

He will not kill any living organism

He will not commit theft

He will not commit adultery
He will not speak lie
He will not get used to any kind of addiction
He will not have food after afternoon
He will keep himself away from the music and dance parties
He will not practice affectation or ostentation and will not use perfumes
He will not sit on any comfortable seat, chair or bed
He will keep himself away from gold and silver[8]

It is a well-established fact that the peace in the world gets disturbed when an individual or a group or part of the society faces danger and violence inflicted upon them by others. The most important thing for man is life itself; if life is in the state of jeopardy, it leads to intensive violence and destruction of world at large. For that, all the religions of the world give much importance to life.

1. Laws and Injunctions of Islam about human life:

The laws, on which foundation of Islamic society and civilization is based on, the foremost among these laws is the law of life and its security. Piety of human soul and positivity, truthfulness and altruism in human action are the most praiseworthy tenets of Islam, whose parallel can ever be found in any religion of the world.

The Holy Quran has mentioned the first act of crime and violence, in which a man killed another, and regards it as the first evil action of human history which paved way for the ultimate disintegration, decay and downfall of mankind. Hence, it became indispensable to teach man to respect and take care of the life of other livings. It was to be inculcated that every living has a right to live, exist and prevail. After mentioning this heinous act of murder, the Holy Quran reveals that:

"On that account we ordained for the children of Israel that if any one slew a person unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land it would be as if he slew the whole people and if any one saved a life it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people." [9]

The above-cited verse reiterates that the murder of one person is tantamount to killing all human beings whereas saving the life of one person is likely to save the whole mankind. While mentioning the characteristics of virtuous man, Allah Almighty reveals in the Holy Quran that:

"Those who make not with God any other god, nor slay such life as God has made sacred" [10]

To highlight the importance of piety and abstinence from evil indulgence, it was further revealed that:

"Take not life which God hath made sacred except by way of justice and law" [11]

Hazarat Anas bin Malak quotes that the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (P.B.U.H) said that the four among all major sins were to associate any partner with Allah, to commit a murder, to disobey parents and to speak lie.[12]

The Holy Prophet in his last sermon delivered at the eve of Hajj said:

"I apprise you that your lives, your property and your honour are similarly as sacred to one another as this sacred day of this sacred month in this sacred town, soon you will be meeting your Lord and He will ask you about your actions. [13]

Islam promulgates stern laws and codes to punish those who spread mischief, commit murder and indulge in terrorism and bloodshed, invoke extremist practices in the society, for them there will be far severe punishment after the Day of Judgment.

If any Islamic state is circumstantially bound to wage war or it is imposed upon them, even then if a person from the enemy side begs for asylum, he must be provided with secure asylum and he should be escorted to the safe place he intends to go to.

"If anyone amongst the Pagans asks thee for asylum, grant it to him so that he may hear the word of God and then escort him to where he can be securing that is because they are men without knowledge."[14]

Islam prefers and appreciates to set the war prisoner free and forbids inflicting torture and misery upon them. Besides, Islam strongly propounds that women, children, the aged, physically or mentally impaired and sick will not be harmed in the battlefield or at warfronts.

Whatever ethical and moral values the present day civilized world possess and boasts of, Islam has its due share in it because the teachings of Islam commenced in the epoch of decadence, disintegration, downfall of values and ethics to the extent that life itself lost its worth and was molested and destroyed with no remorse or regret.

2. Abstinence from Committing Theft:

The second commandment of Buddha for becoming Bikhshu is about the safety of property. It is an undeniable fact that property and possession causes feuds and scuffle in the society, the situation further aggravates if the property or possession is achieved or accumulated by unfair and illegal means. One among many other illegal means of taking possession of other's property is theft, which ensues uncertainty, disintegration, conflict and quarrels in the society.

Islamic Laws and Injunction about Property:

Islam clearly bifurcates the fair and unfair means of accomplishing or accumulating property, it emphasizes the fair and judicious ways to obtain it whereas strongly admonishes and condemns for applying unfair or illegal means to achieve the property what does not legally belong to or you are not legally entitled to possess it. The Holy Quran reveals:

"O ye who believe! Eat not up your property among yourselves in vanities: but let there be amongst you traffic and trade by mutual good will. [15]

It further reveals: "And do not eat up your property among yourselves for vanities, nor use it as bait for judges with intent that ye may eat up wrongfully and knowingly a little of (other) peoples' property.[16]

To commit theft is included one of the major sins and Islam has legislated punishment for it: the Holy Quran prescribes:

"As to the thief male or female, cut off his or her hand: A punishment by way of example from God, for their crime and God is Exalted in power.[17]

If the members of a society get involved in unfair and unjust means of accumulating property like injustice, adulteration, bribe, interest, cheating, baiting, gambling; as the result, the whole fiber of the society gets tinted with evils, quarrels and bloodshed, hence the society becomes bound to wither and crumbles into irrecoverable downfall. Islam not only strongly forbids getting involved in unjust means of collecting property but it also legislates and promulgates clear laws and injunctions regarding the punishments of such heinous acts.

3. To avoid Adultery:

The third commandment of Buddha is not to indulge in adultery. As adultery or extramarital sex spreads decadence, disputes and downfall of values in the society, so Islam has also forbidden illegitimate ways and means employed for the fulfillment of carnal desires. Adultery is one of that illegitimate ways of fulfilling sensual desires therefore the Holy Quran ascertains it as one of the heinous sins/crimes. Almighty Allah reveals:

"Nor come nigh to adultery for it is a shameful (deed) and an evil, opening the road (to other evil).[18]

The Holy Prophet pledged a promise from the believers:

Narrated Ubdah bin As-saamit: Allah's Apostle said while a group of his companions were around him: Swear allegiance to me for: Not to join anything in worship along with Allah, not to steal, not to commit illegal sexual intercourse, not to kill your children, not accuse an innocent person (to spread such an accusation among people), not to be disobedient (when ordered) to do good deed. The prophet added: whoever amongst you fulfills his pledge will be rewarded by Allah. [19]

Islam owing the seamless consequences and adverse after-effects of adultery has ordained it an act subject to punishment. The Holy Quran prescribes the punishment for adultery as under:

"The woman and man guilty of adultery or fornication, flog each of them with a hundred stripes. Let not compassion move you in their case, in a matter prescribed by God, if ye believe in God and the Last Day and let a party of the believers witness their punishment.[20]

The great Islamic scholar Maududi writes: "Islam does not rely on punitive law alone for saving humanity from the menace of fornication. It employs both reformatory and prohibitory measures on a large scale. It has provided legal punishment only as a last resort. Islam does not want that the people should go on committing this crime and getting flogged with stripes day and night. Its real aim is that the people should not commit this crime at all and there should be no occasion to resort to the extreme punishment. For this purpose Islam first of all purifies man. It imbues him with the fear of All-Powerful and

All-Knowing Allah, it inculcates in him the sense of accountability for his actions in the Hereafter from which even death cannot release him. It fills him with obligation of obedience to Divine Law which is sure to follow true faith.[21]

4. Fourth Commandment of Buddha about Prevention from Speaking False:

It is a fact that lie is the mother of all social evils; it begets disputes, breach of trust and pollutes the peace, truth and justice. Truth has always royal road to peace and prosperity notwithstanding some jerks and jolts bound to impede its way. Buddha forbids from telling lie and commands to follow the path of truthfulness. Likewise, Islam also ordains its believers to abstain from speaking lie, and to practice truthfulness in life. The Holy Quran reveals:

"O ye who believe! Fear God and be with those who are true (in word and deed).[22]

The Holy Prophet said: Narrated Abdullah: The Prophet (S.A.W.S) said: "Truthfulness leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to paradise, and a man keeps on telling the truth until he becomes a truthful person. Falsehood leads to Al-Fajur (i.e. wickedness, evil doing) and Al Fajur (wickedness) leads to the (Hell) fire, and a man may keep on telling lies till he is written before Allah, a liar." [23]

Narrated Abu Bakra: Allah's Apostle inculcated thrice: "Shall I not inform you of the biggest of the great sins?" we said yes o Allah's apostle. He said, " To join partners in worship with Allah, to be undutiful to one's parents" the Prophet set up after he had been reclining and added, "And I warn you against giving forged statement and a false witness, I warn you against giving forged statement and false witness." The Prophet keeps on saying that warning till we thought that he would not stop. [24]

5. Abstinence from Addiction:

To attain the state of Nirvana, Buddha in his fifth commandment emphasizes altogether abstinence from all sorts of addiction. It is a fact that the use of drugs and intoxicant material affects the faculties of human, the reasoning faculties for time being remains suspended therefore one fails to distinguish between vice and virtue, good and bad; as the result, it casts adverse impact upon the society and leads to ultimate downfall, decadence and unending disputes or quarrels.

Islam being the religion of peace and prudence also commands its believer to abstain from all kinds of addiction, not only this, but terms addiction as Haram (impermissible/ unlawful/ illegitimate and its use is likely to commit sin and subject to punishment) and there are clear-cut laws of punishment for the consumer of intoxicant materials and drugs of addiction. The Holy Quran reveals:

"O ye who believe, intoxicants, and gambling (Dedication to) stones and (divination by) arrows are an abomination of Satan's handiwork. Eschew such (abomination) that ye may proper. Satan's plan is (but) to excite enmity and hatred between you with intoxicants and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of God, and from prayer will you not then abstain. [25]

Though originally the Arabic word Khamar meant only wine made from grapes, and it was also applied to the liquors made from wheat, barley, dried grapes, dates and honey. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.S) applied the prohibition to all the intoxicants, and there are traditions that clearly support this, for instance:

Narrated Aisha; Allah's Apostle was asked about Al-Bit: he said that all drinks that intoxicate are unlawful (to drink). [26]

Narrated Ibn Umar: "Umar stood up on the pulpit and said: Now then prohibition of alcoholic drinks have been revealed and those drinks are prepared from five things i.e. grapes, dates, honey, wheat or barley and an alcoholic drinks is that disturbs the mind. [27]

In this connection the Holy Prophet laid down the general principle: if a large dose of something is intoxicant, then its smallest dose also is unlawful, and if a cup of everything is intoxicant then a drop of it also is unlawful. [28]

6. Abstinence from Food after Mid-Day:

Buddha in is sixth commandment suggest his follower that for becoming true Bhikshu they must not eat after the mid of the day. For the midday is the crucial time for working, if one takes lunch, he feels sleepy, lethargic and drowsy; therefore, the speed, quality and quantity of doing work gets marred/ hampered. Buddha wants his followers to keep themselves away from taking meal after mid of the day.

However, Islam on the contrary has not forbidden taking routine lunch, but there is a month in which all Muslim adults are supposed to observe fast and not to drink or eat anything from dawn to dusk, this observance is regarded as worship. The month is called Ramdhan – the month of bounty and benevolence. Allah Almighty reveals:

Ramadhan is the (month) in which was sent down, the Quran, as a guide to mankind, also clear (Signs) for guidance and judgment (between right and wrong) so everyone of you who is present (at his home) during that month should spend it in fasting, but if anyone is ill or own journey, the prescribed period (should be made up) by days later. God intends every facility for you, He does not want to put you difficulties. [29]

Further ALLAH says: And eat and drink until the white thread of dawn appears to you distinct from its black thread then complete your fast till the night appears.[30]

The observance of fast is highly beneficial for individual in particular and society in general. The fasting instills patience, tolerance, sympathy for hungry people and piety or control over baser passions.

7. Avoidance from Music, Dance and Party:

In his seventh commandment, Buddha forbids to join dance parties, musical concert because such deeds eventually become an inalienable and integral part of the nature of rich people; the continuous indulgence in these activities makes them obsessed with sensual and amorous sentiments, ostentation, worldly affection, pomp and show. Thus, such sorts of parties of music and dance lead to moral decadence, as the result, the young debauchee

become lethargic, work-shy, lecherous, debauched and prone to unending quarrels, feuds and disputes. Islam has also forbidden attending such kind of parties/concert which may lead towards ultimate decay and downfall of individual and society as well.

The Holy Prophet said that some of my followers would drink wine just by changing/labeling it with other names, music would be played before them, and there would be female singer/dancer before them. Allah would inhume them under the ground and their state would be degraded to the level of a beast. [31]

Islam does not altogether forbid attaining the parties/gatherings that provide aesthetic pleasure to human, neither does Islam suppress human natural feelings but it only draws laws and principles to control, refine and reform the conduct of man, so that he could have self-control, temperance and piety. Islam allows such kinds of gathering/get-together parties/concerts which may not result into amorous indulgence, disputes and feuds.

8. Avoiding Affectation/Ostentation and Perfumes:

In his eighth commandment, Buddha forbids his Bikhsu to indulge in worldly ostentatious vanities of pomp and show and also prevents from using/applying/spraying perfume. Buddha is of the view that nobody can attain the state of Nirvana unless he has subdued and refined his passion/appetites and is not slave to his desires. Basically, these things/activities imbue worldly and materialistic feelings in human being and hinder or impede one from going into the state of seclusion and complete asceticism.

Whereas, Islam strongly inculcates the importance of cleanliness and teaches its followers to keep themselves clean, tidy and in good state of hygiene; however, the teaching of Islam compulsorily requires believers to do ablution, take bath; in addition to it, Islam not only permits to use perfume but in some cases declares it a praise-worthy act to be applauded for it inspires others and brings positivity in the quality of life. Allah Almighty reveals: “O children of Adam wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer, eat and drink but waste not by excess, for God loveth not the wasters”. [32]

Holy Prophet himself liked perfume and he also suggested/taught his followers to apply/spray perfume (the soothing impact of fragrance increases the opportunity of interaction which leads to love, attachment and positive relationship. [33]

Narrated Salman-Al-Farsi: The prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.S) said whoever takes a bath on Friday, purifies himself as much as he can, then uses his (Hair) oil or perfumes himself with the scent of his house, then proceeds (For the Juma prayer) [an especial pray offered on each Friday] and does not separate two persons sitting together (in the mosque) then prays as much (ALLAH has) written for him and then remains silent while the Imam is delivering the Khutba [sermon], his sins in between the present and last Friday would be forgiven.[34]

If somebody offers presents containing perfume, it is obligatory on other to accept it.[35]

There is only one occasion, on which applying perfume is forbidden in Islam that is during the pilgrimage or Hajj. The dress which pilgrims wear during performing Hajj is called Ahram, and it is forbidden to spray perfume/attar on it.[36]

The latest research studies and in-depth exploration have opened fresh window to this kind of knowledge that fragrance casts deep impact/influence on the attitude of human beings; it not only enthuses man but also works as stimulus. In the 21st century Fragrance Therapy is used as a mode of treating patients.

9. Sitting and Sleeping on Comfortable beds/things:

In order to attain the state of Bhikshu, Buddha in his ninth commandment mentions that his true believer/follower would never sit on a comfortable thing nor will recline/sleep on it. This practice imbues simplicity and detachment from worldly comforts. Once a man frees himself from the luxury and lust, he does not easily fall prey to greediness, cunningness, cheating, feuds and injustice.

Conversely, Islam does not forbid availing the means of comfort for enhancing the quality of life but it prevents from making such accumulation whole purpose of life, whereas, Islam promotes simplicity, austerity and thriftiness in life. Holy Prophet himself lived a very simple life, though he was the leader of his nation/followers, yet he never exhibited the fake show of power and possession what mostly the kings or emperors of the powerful empires often did. He wore simple clothes, ate simple food and preferred simplicity and frugality in the other affairs of life as well. Hazrat Ayesha narrated that the bed of the Holy Prophet was made of leather, and a mat made out of the leaves of palm lay spread onto it.[37]

When one of the wives of the Holy Prophet, Hazart Hifiza was asked about the bed of the Holy Prophet, she replied that it was made of simple wool and was coarse and hard. Holy Prophet slept on it by folding it into two. Once she folded it four times to make it more comfortable, but on the next morning the Holy Prophet enquired from her what kind of bed she had set for him. She replied the bed had been same but she had just folded it four-fold to make it comfortable. The Holy Prophet ordered her to bring it to its previous state, because the comfortable bed constrained him for rising to Tahjad Prayers (offered after mid night).[38]

The above cited statements authenticate that the Holy Prophet did not sleep/recline on soft or comfortable bed, as these enhance to intensity and duration of sleep, thus one fails to worship one's Lord. Though the Holy Prophet was the quintessence of humanity and paragon of virtue, one cannot expect or associate such failure with him, but he set this example for his followers and rest of humanity to track the path of truth.

10. Avoidance from Wearing Jewelry made of Gold or Silver:

The tenth and last commandment of Buddha for Nirvana is that a Bhikshu would refrain from wearing/using gold and silver ornaments. It is also a source of detachment from materialistic world. It has been generally observed

that greed and avarice of possessing silver and gold ensue quarrels and disputes in the society. Likewise, Islam also forbids use of the crockery/vessels made of gold, especially one used for dining purpose. The Sahih Bukhari includes one tradition:

Narrated Hudhaifa: The Prophet (S.A.W.S) forbade us to drink out of gold and silver vessels or eat in it and also forbade the wearing of silk.[39]

However, Islam allows women to wear the ornaments made of gold and silver but man is forbidden to wear ornaments made of such metals.

The Holy Prophet said that these both metals (their use for the sake of ornaments) are unlawful for male believers/followers; whereas, woman can use (silver and gold) for the sake of ornaments or jewelry.[40]

In the light of above tradition all Islamic jurists unanimously agree that:
The use of gold and silver for sake of beautification is unlawful for male Muslims whereas female Muslims can use it.[41]

Islam has strongly forbidden the use of dining crockery/vessels made of gold or silver because it promotes affectation, vanities and pomp and show; moreover, it is the sign of profligacy, lavishness and extravagance. Thus, it invokes the feelings of materialistic race in the society, man falls prey to pride and pomp; in the pursuit of such accumulation, he employs fowl and fair means and surpasses all the bounds of justice and ethics. Eventually, it leads to ultimate downfall and decay of the society.

Conclusion:

All ancient or modern religions of world like Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, Jainism or Islam emphasize and endeavour for the uplift of highest moral and ethical values to be instilled in human being to procure discipline and good will in global perspective. Some of the religions strictly commands for proper observance and submission to the laws and cannons whereas the other religions do not require strict allegiance so for the code or laws are concerned yet they nourish and treat human emotions and direct them for the general good of the society. Overall, all religions aim at moral and ethical uplift of man, to instill positivity in him and imbue the spirit of sacrifice, equality, affection, brotherhood and justice in mankind.

Thus, these all facts testify that all religions, with some differences of pattern, propagate the message of love, equality, brotherhood, justice and equity in the age of materialistic-accumulation-race and greed-ridden epoch where individual profits and benefit overwhelm collective cause and general welfare of mankind.

Findings:

The thorough study of religion and human history reveals that religion is an additional blessing and power bestowed upon man that serves as a natural force to direct the cognitive self-will and intellectual power of man to right direction. One cannot deny the fact that the fountainhead of all ethical and moral values of present time is none other but religion.

The history of the world bears testimony that the religious teachings promote peace, love, brotherhood, equality, justice and curb wars, oppression of all sorts, exploitation, selfishness and barbarism.

Whenever, man assumes the entity of a callous barbarian and exercises his natural power and potential to shed blood and commit injustice and oppression, the religion steps forward to enthuse and inspire man with the noblest notion of love, peace, justice, brotherhood and equality. Thus, the course of collective goodness and selfless righteousness get saved from being derailed and man in particular and humanity in general march towards the path of truth, progress and prosperity.

As bodily desires invoke negative feelings like jealousy, anger, selfishness, exploitation; whereas, the religion endeavours to curb these negative feelings and promotes love, tolerance, justice, brotherhood, sympathy, sacrifice, equity and ethical values, hence religious teachings primarily emphasize human rights and service to mankind.

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